REMARKS

This is intended as a full and complete response to the Final Office Action dated March 11, 2005, having a shortened statutory period for response set to expire on June 11, 2005. Applicants submit this response to place the application in condition for allowance or in better form for appeal. Please reconsider the claims pending in the application for reasons discussed below.

Claims 1-16 are pending in the application. Claims 1-8 and 10-16 remain pending following entry of this response. Claims 1, 7 and 11 have been amended. Claims 9 has been cancelled. Applicants submit that the amendments do not introduce new matter.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Bixler et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 6,212,559 (hereinafter *Bixler*), in view of *Tarbox et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 6,020,889, (hereinafter *Tarbox*). The Examiner takes the position that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify *Bixler* by adding SCSI port as taught by *Tarbox*. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The Examiner bears the initial burden of establishing a *prima facie* case of obviousness. *See* MPEP § 2142. To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine the reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Third, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. *See* MPEP § 2143. The present rejection fails to establish at least the third criteria.

Bixler discloses a system for configuring a communications network of multiple interconnected computers. The system includes a graphical user interface that facilitates the functions of task organization development, platform equipment development, address book development and logical network development in a simulated planning phase of operation. Using the system, an authorized user performs

these development functions to define one or more logical communication networks, and then the system automatically generates specifications for a corresponding physical communication network, including management information blocks. (*Bixler*, Abstract). In a dissemination phase of operation, the management information blocks are transmitted to the network computers. (*Bixler*, Abstract). In an execution phase of operation, the received management information blocks are used to condition the network computers to switch to the new configuration upon receipt of a timing or command signal, when the computers all switch to a new configuration at the same time. (*Bixler*, Abstract).

The present invention provides a method for dynamically linking a storage space to a network server, comprising: adding a new disk drive image to a network server description for the network server through a host server operating system, the new disk drive image corresponding to the storage space to be linked; sending a dynamic linking request from the host server operating system to a network server operating system; in response to the dynamic linking request, sending a device scanning request from the network server operating system to the host server operating system; in response to the device scanning request, requesting a response from each device connected to each SCSI port of a host server and reporting the new disk drive image to the network server operating system; and presenting the new disk drive image to users connected to the network server.

The steps recited in the claims include specific actions and responses from respective entities that are not shown, taught or disclosed in the references cited by the Examiner. The network configuration tool of *Bixler* resides on a host computer and utilizes a graphical user interface (with inputs by an administrator and data from modules/databases) to simulate configurations of networked computers until no more errors are reported. (See *Bixler*, col. 9, line 66 to col. 10, line 1). No communication between the host system and the network computers are performed until after the planning phases simulations are completed. Therefore, as a general matter, *Bixler's* planning and dissemination phases can not be argued to teach a host system communicating with the network systems, and vice versa.

For example, *Bixler* does not teach show or suggest sending a device scanning request from the network server operating system to the host operating system in response to the dynamic linking request. Regarding this recitation in the claim, the Examiner states that *Bixler* discloses identifying type of device and type of connection in col. 9, line 28-46 of *Bixler*. However, the passages cited the Examiner are directed to simulation actions performed by modules of the *Bixler*'s network configuration tool (i.e., not between a network server operating system and a host operating system) in a planning phase prior to transmitting the command to switch to the new configuration. (*See* Bixler col. 8, lines 52-55). In other words, col. 9, line 28-46 of *Bixler* does not teach any kind of interaction between operating systems (more particularly, between a network server operating system and a host operating system)

As another example, *Bixler* does not teach, show or suggest requesting a response from each device connected to each port of a host server in response to the device scanning request and reporting the new disk drive image to the network server operating system. The Examiner states that *Bixler* discloses verifying hardware requirements to establish connection at col. 9, lines 40-55. However, the cited passage is directed to a "communication network engine 63" which includes an "IP-address generation module 64" which provides address data to other modules. The cited passage does not teach requesting of a response from each device connected to each port of a host system is performed. Nor does the cited passage teach requesting of a response from each device connected to each port of a host system in response to a "device scanning request".

Tarbox, as discussed in previous response, describes a typical computer which includes an I/O adapter which may be a SCSI (Small Computer System Interface) device that communicates with a disk storage device but does not teach, show or suggest a method for adding storage space to a server. Applicants submit that the references cited by the Examiner, either alone or in combination, do not teach show or suggest a method for dynamically linking a storage space to a network server, as claimed in independent claim 1 and those depending therefrom or a method for linking a storage space to an active server, as claimed in independent claim 11 and those depending therefrom.

Claim 7 has been amended to include the limitations of original claim 9 and recitations similar to those recited in claim 1. Applicants submit that no new issues are raised by the amendment. Regarding the rejection, Applicants respectfully submit that *Bixler* does not teach, show or suggest requesting a response from each device connected to each SCSI port of the server in response to the device scanning request. As discussed above, no "device scanning" or requesting of a response from each device connected to each port of the server is performed.

Therefore, the claims are believed to be in condition for allowance, and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Having addressed all issues set out in the office action, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request that the claims be allowed.

Respectfully submitted,

Gero G. McClellan
Registration No. 44,227
MOSER, PATTERSON & SHERIDAN, L.L.P.
3040 Post Oak Blvd. Suite 1500
Houston, TX 77056
Telephone: (713) 623-4844
Facsimile: (713) 623-4846
Attorney for Applicants